Practicum and Internships

If you are completing the MA degree-only option (no endorsement), the following section of this Handbook does not apply to you. If you are seeking an endorsement in LD or ASD, you will be required to take at least one practicum and, if you don’t have a prior special education endorsement, an internship.

The practicums are 3-credit experiences that are associated with a particular course. In the LD emphasis area, one practicum (CEP 894) is taken in conjunction with CEP 842 (content-area instruction). Another is taken in conjunction with CEP 804A (literacy methods). In a practicum, you are able to apply the theoretical and practical knowledge from the affiliated courses in the instruction and assessment of students with disabilities in school settings. If you are in an endorsement program, it is expected that you will complete the practicum with the types of students in that endorsement area—LD students for the LD endorsement, ASD students for the ASD endorsement. The practicum’s help you meet State of Michigan requirements for endorsement.

The internship is a 3- to 6-credit extended teaching experience in which you will be asked to engage in a series of specific tasks in which you apply the assessment, instructional, behavioral, and collaborative skills you have learned in the masters program. The internship can only be taken after you have completed all the other requirements of the program, and is offered only in the spring semester.

Because students in the MA program can be spread across the country and, indeed, around the world, we are not able to make arrangements for your practicums and internship. You will need to locate a setting and students that permit you to meet the practicum requirements during the time you are enrolled in the practicums and internship. The course instructor can help advise you of the suitability of a practicum setting. However, if you have any questions about your ability to find a suitable placement, you should immediately contact the MA Program Coordinator or your advisor. To assist you in planning for these experiences, here is a summary of the expectations and requirements necessary for the approval of any practicum setting.

Practicum Hours

90 total contact hours is required for each practicum, including 90 hours in the instruction of students with disabilities in content-area instruction (during CEP 842) and 90 hours in the instruction of students with disabilities in literacy (during CEP 804A). A log of hours must be completed and submitted at the conclusion of the practicum.

Instructional Group that Includes Students with Disabilities: In the practicum setting, you must have access to an instructional group that includes with disabilities who match the endorsement criteria (i.e., LD or ASD). Further, you must have a minimum of 6 contact hours per week with the group in instructional activities designed to satisfy the applied requirements of the associated course (literacy, content-area instruction).
Onsite Supervisor: An onsite supervisor within the school district who has certification in the desired endorsement area must be identified, and the associated paperwork bearing the supervisor’s signature must be submitted in order for the supervisory arrangement to be reviewed and approved.

Appropriate Instructional Setting: Practicums must be completed in the settings in which the students in your endorsement area are typically educated by qualified personnel. Thus, most LD practicums and internships are completed in K-12 classrooms. ASD practicums and internships may be completed in K-12 settings or in center- or home-based programs, as long as these are directed by qualified personnel. Home-based tutoring or other activities conducted outside the auspices of a certified educational entity are not appropriate as internship or practicum settings.

Videotaping: Teaching videos are required as integral parts of the practicums and internship. You will analyze and reflect about your own teaching, through the videos you create, and videos also will be reviewed by course instructors. In some cases, you will be asked to share your teaching videos with other students in your program. Finally, teaching videos are a key piece in your teaching portfolio.